

# ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2016]

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## Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council

held on: Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016, at 7.00 p.m.

*Present:* Cllr Meg Price (MP) - Chairman  
Cllr Graham Stafford (GS) – Vice Chairman  
Cllr Nikki Ernest (NE)  
Cllr Heather Jordan (HJ)  
Cllr Di Howard (DH)

*In attendance:* Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk), Councillor Peter Griffiths (WSCC) (from 7.30 p.m.), Councillor John Allen (MSDC) (from 8.30 p.m.), and 5 members of the public (for parts or all of the meeting).

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[Before the start of the meeting, there was a moment's silence in memory of Councillor Barry Compton, who had very sadly passed away just recently.]

- 1. (2016/036) – Chairman formally opens the meeting, welcomes those present, and receives apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Councillor Nick Wergan.
- 2. (2016/037) – Declarations of interest.** Councillor NE declared a personal interest in the planning applications DM/16/0373 (Heblands), DM/16/0893 (Gretta Gate), and DM/16/0713 (Little Copyhold) as she is a near neighbour of the properties concerned, and so said that she would not be taking part in any discussion or decision relating to these items. Councillor GS declared a personal interest in the planning application DM/16/0713 (Little Copyhold) as he is a near neighbour of the property concerned, and so said that he would not take part in any discussion or decision relating to the item. Councillor HJ declared a personal interest in the item concerning the allotments, as she is an Albourne allotment plot holder.
- 3. (2016/038) – Adjournment for any questions or issues raised by members of the public** – It was reported that the HGV issue is bigger than ever, with many drivers also being rude and aggressive. The issue of a “not suitable for HGVs” sign for Church Lane was considered, but this might be difficult because of the need to make deliveries. However, it may be necessary to write to property owners advising of the problem. The issue of satellite navigation also needed to be looked into, so that drivers do not take inappropriate routes, and if possible avoid The Street. There is still no news from

MSDC/WSCC on the Tree Preservation Orders for the trees in the common “copse” land. There was an issue about the replanting of this area, and WSCC need to be urged to carry this out in the autumn. It was noted that following MSDC’s cutting back of the hedge along the footpath by the Village Hall, there was a lot of debris and trimmings left in the surrounding areas. This needs to be cleared up as soon as possible.

4. **(2016/039) – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 were duly approved and signed, as a true record, by the Chairman.

5. **(2016/040) – To receive reports (if any) from WSCC Councillor Peter Griffiths (PG), and MSDC Councillor John Allen (JA).** Councillor PG referred to the quiet run tarmac issue along the A23, and handed round a summary of the latest position. Funding remains an issue, but the work is programmed in phases, from 2017/18. The grant application to the County Local Committee for the Village Hall kitchen refurbishment is in hand, and looks positive. He urges consultation responses on the 3 in 1 card scheme by WSCC, and will send further information. There will be a further tranche of Operation Watershed (OW) money from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. He will be speaking to the WSCC Cabinet member about the Firland planning situation. A nearby school crossing has at last been completed. There are still indications that WSCC will be buying the scientific park site, and he will check this further (in response to a query from Councillor NE). He said that he would chase up Richard Speller at one of his periodic meetings with him, about the non response to various matters raised by the Parish Council. It is for example difficult to take forward OW, without this input. Councillor JA updated the meeting on the Corporate Plan and budget for MSDC, which had been approved in February. He referred to progress with the District Plan, and that that this was due for submission in the spring. Councillor NE’s comments on the letter from Tom Clark haven been forwarded to the Planning Committee Chairman, Councillor Andrew McNaughton. He queried the minutes of the last meeting regarding the requirement for MSDC representation at Parish Council meetings, which he felt was not a reasonable expectation, but confirmed that he would attend as often as possible.

6. **(2016/041) – Planning matters.**

6.1 Five planning applications were considered, and the plans and relevant policies presented and discussed. It was therefore **RESOLVED to comment to MSDC as follows:-**

PROPERTY	PROPOSAL	AGREED RESPONSE
DM/16/0893 – Gretta Gate, Henfield Road	Two storey extension to east of detached dwelling and entrance porch to north together with associated elevational changes and modified driveway to link existing gated access points.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application, but it is believed that the land over which the proposed driveway is going to be located is agricultural land, and so the significance of this in planning terms needs to be fully assessed. The Parish Council would also request a condition that construction and/or delivery lorries and vehicles must not be allowed to park in the lane, and that suitable on site provision

		should therefore be made.
DM/16/0713 – Little Copyhold	Remove garage pitched roof and construct first floor accommodation. First floor extension to rear above existing ground floor projection.	Albourne Parish Council has no objections to this application, but would request a condition that construction and/or delivery lorries and vehicles must not be allowed to park in the lane, and that suitable on site provision should therefore be made.
DM/16/ 0955 - Hamiltons, Church Lane	(T1) Lime - raise crown by 3m. (T3) Scots Pine (fell. (T4) Scots Pine - fell.	Albourne Parish Council does not object to the proposed work to (T1), although it is of the view that the extent of the raising is excessive, and will unbalance the tree. It would therefore prefer this to be to 2m, rather than 3m. The Parish Council objects to the felling of (T3) and (T4) as it can find no good reasons for these proposals, and they are considered valued amenity trees.
DM/16/0373 – Heblands, Henfield Road	Ground floor extensions and addition of first floor to form two storey dwelling. Amended plans.	The amended plans show an improvement on the previous application, as there is a reduction in the bulk of the size of the building. However, there still needs to be a reduction in the overall height of the proposed dwelling to a more appropriate level, in order to make it fully acceptable in planning terms.
AE/DM/1271 – South Pottersfield Cottage, Henfield Road	Construction of tractor store and workshop.	Albourne Parish Council is aware that this application was <u>recently withdrawn</u> . However it was on the agenda for our meeting on 5th April and discussed at the meeting. Councillors agreed to send MSDC their views on this application. Albourne Parish Council was concerned about a few aspects of this application. It is not clear from the application on why the building is required and its proposed use, given that there is already an outbuilding on this site. Councillors also felt that the design of the building was not sympathetic to the rural location or the nearby listed Potters Field cottages.

Note: In accordance with her declaration of interest above, Councillor NE took no part in the consideration of the first three items and did not vote in the matter. Likewise Councillor GS in respect of the second item.

6.2 On the Neighbourhood Plan, Councillor NE confirmed that the independent examiner recently appointed by MSDC had not yet reported back, but that this report is expected later next month (April).

6.3 On the Firsland Industrial Estate Park planning application, and the related applications, it was noted that there had been many objections, including from Horsham District Council, to the proposal to install a water tank on land near to the property. The outcome is awaited, and it was noted that there is still the option of involving the local MPs, should this prove to be necessary.

6.4 On other planning enforcement matters with MSDC, Foxglove cottage: retrospective planning application still awaited (MSDC has said that this can be quite a long process). Field off Albourne Place: site is subject of full, ongoing planning investigation as regards possible planning breaches. Copyhold Farm: planning and environmental health aspects still being investigated, possibility of retrospective Lawful Development Certificate being required.. Track near Bishops Place: owner invited to submit retrospective planning application for the track. High Cross Farm: screening issues are being investigated by planning officer. Albourne Equestrian Centre: no further action considered necessary.

## 7. (2016/042) – Finance report and matters.

7.1 The financial summary and the Bank reconciliation for the month, were received, noted, and approved.

7.2 Invoices were presented for payment, and it **was RESOLVED to agree and to make the following payments:-**

AMOUNT	PROCUREMENT	PAYEE
£410-63	Clerk's salary + on costs (March 2016)	West Sussex County Council
£194-32	WSALC/NALC subscriptions (2016/2017)	West Sussex ALC Limited
£211-11	Annual grounds maintenance High Cross, Albourne (2016/17)	Mid Sussex District Council

7.3 The Clerk had previously reported, but it was noted for the record, that the external audit regime would be changing from the financial year 2017/18. Any Parish Council with a turnover of less than 25K, which is likely to include Albourne PC, will be able to self-certify itself as an exempt authority, but if so, this fact will need to be advertised on the website. This means that provided the Council is complying with the Transparency Code, the Council will simply have to publish its Annual Return on the website, and will not need to submit it to the external auditor. However, in case of challenge, all Authorities are still required to have an external auditor on board, and so on the recommendation of the Clerk, the Parish Council has opted into the new Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments body (SAAA), along with most Town and Parish

Councils (for economies of scale). The requirements for the annual, internal audit have not changed.

**8. (2016/043) – Albourne Infrastructure Delivery Schedule/Plan.** The Clerk reported that this document was up to date, following recent correspondence between the Clerk and MSDC, but subject to the need to include a couple of changes notified to the Clerk by Councillor MP. The significant objective was the improvement/refurbishment of the playground in the Recreation Ground, but that funding of such a project remained the issue. Other than that, the document was noted and approved.

**9. (2016/044) – Parking in Albourne Court.** This related to the issue of inconsiderate parking by mainly the parents of children being dropped off at the School. The complaints have been taken up with the School, and it was believed that they would be sending letters to the parents, reminding them that this area was not to be used as it is a private estate. It was accepted that overall, better arrangements were needed for the car parking, and this is an ongoing issue being looked into by the Parish Council. The Clerk will also write to the School, in order to reiterate the point.

**10. (2016/045) – Allotments.** After due discussion, it was RESOLVED to split the centre allotment plot in half, so as to enable this to be let as a new smaller allotment plot. It was noted that Mrs H Jordan would be keeping the other half. It was also agreed that the new plot should be let on a first come, first served basis, provided that applicants lived in Albourne. The Clerk confirmed that he had two people on a new waiting list, which he had created, and so would offer the plot to the first person on that list accordingly. This might also be something worth mentioning at the forthcoming Annual Parish meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016, and to put up on the website. The Clerk will look into this further.

**11. (2016/046) – Format for Annual Parish meeting of Electors on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016.** The Clerk will deal with the preparation and ordering of the usual flyer to be delivered to each household advertising the event. This will be done on coloured A5 size paper in the usual way. There will be an update on the Neighbourhood Plan/District Plan. Councillor GS will update on flooding and Operation Watershed. It was still unclear whether Richard Speller (WSCC) and the PCSO, both of whom had been invited would be attending the meeting. There will be the usual slot for Councillors Peter Griffiths (WSCC) and John Allen (MSDC). Councillor HJ will give an update on hedges/trees/pathways in the Parish. Ann Higginson, the Chairman of the VHMS, will update the meeting on Village Hall issues. The Clerk will progress this further, and it was noted that the Agenda needs to be out and up 7 clear days before the meeting (i.e. mid April).

**12. (2016/047) – Operation Watershed.** Councillor GS reported that he is still chasing up WSCC (Richard Speller) for a response to the outstanding issues. It was noted that there is remedial flooding work being done by WSCC along Reeds Lane, but it has recently been too wet to complete the job. It was considered that in order to move things along more speedily and satisfactorily, the Parish Council should apply for the new tranche of Operation Watershed money, which WSCC was making available very shortly. This would enable the necessary surveying work to proceed, so that the problems and the solutions can be ascertained. Also, the water run off at times of heavy rain from the Village Hall car park, and

area, still needs to be looked into and resolved. Councillor GS said that he would try and speak to Gulu Sibanda (WSCC) about this ongoing issue.

**13. (2016/048) – Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).** The minutes of the last meeting (yet to be drafted) will refer, but it was noted that the Committee is going ahead with the kitchen refurbishment, and is in the process of seeking appropriate estimates/quotes for this project. The light bulbs replacement issue has been resolved, and it was agreed that the Parish Council would pay for this. It was noted that the emergency lighting is now working. Councillor MP recapped on the forthcoming social events at the Hall, e.g. the quiz, etc., and it was noted that these would all be advertised in due course on the community website.

**14. (2016/049) – Current issues.** (i) On the traffic issues, it was noted with regret that John Couling is not now able to undertake the Speed-watch task, because of his commitments, but it is understood that he does have a neighbour who is happy to take on the task in his place in due course, (ii) there is still no progress on the outdated road signage issue, and this is one of the things that Councillor GS will continue to pursue with Richard Speller, (iii) the issue of the tree work (Recreation Ground) and hedge work (along Village Hall footpath) has been taken up, in terms of the lack of consultation by MSDC. Councillor John Allen has also been informed. He has also spoken with Councillor Pru Moore (the MSDC Cabinet member with responsibility for leisure) about the issue of improving the playground specifically, and the Recreation Ground generally. There is no section 106 planning money (as previously advised) and nor can any New Homes Bonus money be used, so funding remains the issue (as stated above). It was felt that the best way forward was to organise meetings at various level with MSDC, to look into the replanting of the hedge, should it die back completely, and also in terms of the Recreation Ground issues. These matters were therefore ongoing, and the Clerk and individual Councillors will pursue accordingly.

**15. (2016/050) - Councillors exchange of information/new matters.** MP noted that one of the two extra dog waste bins applied for by the Parish Council had been installed (Recreation Ground). It looked like the concrete base for the new bench by the bus stop had gone in. The issue of the storage bags needed to be chased up, particularly at Woodbine Cottage. A van parked up on the grass verge had been told to move, so the PC was on occasions doing its own enforcement. The new Parish Councillor issue needed to be raised at the Annual Parish meeting. NE raised the Q Leisure Park & Ride issue, and there had been another article in the Brighton Argus. The matter has not therefore gone away, and she wondered whether Councillor Garry Wall (MSDC) should be asked to go on the record about it, and make more of a firm statement about it not being supported. Councillor John Allen thought there may be some mileage in this. She mentioned that she had heard that Claire Tester, the Head of Planning at MSDC, was leaving the Council, and was concerned that this might have an adverse effect on the District Plan examinations, when they happen. HJ reported on the progress of the footpath work, and said that some had been done, but not others. For example, there were still two paths that were blocked. She would be chasing up the Footpaths Ranger at WSCC. However, what was needed was a proper report from WSCC. It was noted that the hedge at Hunters Mead was the responsibility of MSDC, and so this could be added to the maintenance list that HJ had previously prepared. There was an issue about some wood shavings from a tree that had come down in the recent storm, and

which had recently been removed, near Spring Cottage in Church Lane, but it may mulch down. The property owner, who happened to be Councillor NW, would be consulted.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

SIGNED.....Meg Price/Graham Stafford  
Chairman/Vice Chairman

***NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: TUESDAY, 10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2016 @ 7.00 p.m. (BEING ALSO THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING)***